



PRESS RELEASE

AG Gansler Backs Law Enforcement and Prosecutor-Friendly Bills that Curb Illegal Gun Trafficking, Capture Criminals and Block Illegal Firearm Sales

Attorney General Announces 1st Annual Statewide Gun Turn-in Day, May 11

Baltimore, MD (February 11, 2013) - Attorney General Douglas F. Gansler today announced his support for gun-related legislation before the Maryland General Assembly - including bills that would require reporting of lost or stolen firearms, establish better recordkeeping for gun and ammunition sales, ban cop-killer bullets, and lift the one-year statute of limitations for gun crimes - while proposing legislation that would make it difficult for prohibited persons to lie on a purchase application for a regulated firearm such as a handgun.

Last week, Attorney General Gansler, Maryland's top law enforcement official, testified in support of SB281 - The Firearm Safety Act of 2013 - expressing particular support for its fingerprinting requirement for handgun purchases, a measure he considers one of the most effective ways to stop straw purchases, which are currently a major source of illegal handguns. Attorney General Gansler's support for this and other legislative measures comes directly from the practical recommendations for gun crime reduction advocated by police, prosecutors, civic leaders and legal scholars during the Attorney General's Forum on Gun Violence last week, as well as his 20-plus years as a prosecutor.

"The men and women who work hard every day to protect our families, homes and businesses know we can reduce gun crime and preserve responsible gun ownership for the law-abiding," said Attorney General Gansler. "These bills, along with systematic gun turn-in programs, will help us keep illegal firearms off the streets and out of the hands of criminals and other prohibited persons."

In addition to supporting bills already introduced in the state legislature, Attorney General Gansler is recommending adoption of another tool expected to benefit prosecutors by making it more difficult for prohibited persons to lie on a purchase application for a regulated firearm such as a handgun. A soon-to-be introduced bill will require a gun dealer to recite and initial, at the time of sale, critical firearm purchase application questions such as, "Have you ever been convicted in Maryland or elsewhere of a felony?" The measure would ensure purchasers have actual knowledge of who is a prohibited purchaser. This enhanced application process will further deter criminals from purchasing guns, and make it easier for prosecutors to hold

accountable those who lie on their firearm purchase application and then claim they did not know they were prohibited from purchasing a gun in order to escape prosecution.

"Cracking down on convicted felons and others who lie on gun applications will reduce illegal gun purchases and limit criminals' access to guns," said Attorney General Gansler.

Adding an additional and time-tested tool to the reduction of illegal handguns on our streets, Attorney General Gansler also announced today that Saturday, May 11, 2013 will be The Attorney General's 1st Annual Statewide Gun Turn-in Day. Working with state's attorneys and law enforcement in local jurisdictions across the state, the gun turn-in event will allow anyone to surrender illegal or unwanted handguns, rifles, shotguns or air guns to local law enforcement, no questions asked. No personal identification will be required.

"This gives family members the opportunity to remove illegal and unwanted guns from the home that they fear would be used to harm themselves or others," added the Attorney General.

Among the gun and gun safety legislation before the Maryland General Assembly that Attorney General Gansler supports are those bills which:

- Require gun dealers to inform buyers of the duty to report lost or stolen guns and require gun owners to promptly report theft or loss;
- Require gun shops and firing ranges to keep ammo logs and allow the Maryland State Police (MSP) to inspect them;
- Prohibit a gun dealer's license when the dealer plans to work with a person ineligible to participate in gun sales, impose recordkeeping requirements for gun sales, and allow effective MSP inspections;
- Require gun dealers to have adequate security and safe storage measures in place before they can get a dealer's license;
- Strengthen individual gun storage requirements to prevent guns stored in the home to get into the hands of children, the mentally ill and known criminals.